

REMARKS

Favorable consideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 18-21 are now pending in the application. Claim 18 is independent. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9-17 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claims 18-21 are newly-presented herein.

In the Office Action dated January 4, 2007, Claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,011,546 (Bertram) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,530,869 (Salle) and No. 5,986,586 (Tsai). Since Claims 1, 3, 5, 6 and 9-17 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, that rejection is deemed moot. Newly-presented Claims 18-21 are believed to be patentable over the citations of record for the following reasons.

Bertram relates to a programming structure for user interfaces, in which programs stored in memory devices are associated with micro-controllers controlling a display for a user. Bertram allows various menus to be cascaded on a screen. As recognized by the Examiner, Bertram does not disclose or suggest one-to-one correspondence between a plurality of functions according to a plurality of sets of items and a plurality of function keys.

It is respectfully submitted that Bertram fails to disclose or suggest at least displaying a first hierarchical level menu, displaying, on a same screen, a second hierarchical level menu according to a selected first item, selecting one of the first and second items, displaying a registration menu comprising third items relating to function keys, and assigning a

function according to a set of selected first and second items to a function key related to the selected third item with one-two-one correspondence, as is recited in independent Claim 18.

Thus, Bertram fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claim 18.

Salle describes a system and method that enable a user to locate a feature in a menu-based program by flattening the hierarchy, and can permit the user to customize the system by inputting user-defined terms and features and associating the terms with a particular feature. However, as recognized by the Examiner, any combination of Bertram and Salle would also fail to disclose one-two-one correspondence. Thus, Salle fails to remedy the deficiencies of Bertram noted above with respect to independent Claim 18.

Tsai is directed to a keyboard including hot keys that can be used to control and manipulate peripheral equipment. The hot keys can be executed according to a Windows application program. The hot keys can also be designed with a macro procedure to carry out preset procedures or functions. However, Tsai also does not disclose or suggest displaying first and second hierarchical level and registration menus, selecting one of the first, second and third items, and assigning a function according to a set of the selected first and second items to a function key relating to the selected third item with one-two-one correspondence. Accordingly, Tsai fails to remedy the deficiencies of Bertram and Salle noted above with respect to independent Claim 18.

Accordingly, independent Claim 18 is patentable over the citations of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection are respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claim 18. Dependent Claims 19-21 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowability is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark A. Williamson
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 33,628

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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